

Transcript Senate Meeting September 17, 2019

Nedret Billor, Chair: Good afternoon. Welcome to the September 17, 2019 meeting of the University Senate. This is our second meeting of the 2019-20 academic year.

First, if you are a Senator or a Substitute for a Senator please be sure you sign in on the Senate roll sheet at the top of the room and take a clicker. Second, we need to establish a quorum. We have 87 Senators in the Senate and we need 45 for a quorum. Please press A on your clicker to show you are present.

Let the record show we have 59 present (senators), so a quorum is established.

I now call the meeting to order.

I would like to remind you of some basic procedures for the Senate meeting for Senators and guests. If you would like to speak about an issue or ask a question, please go to the microphone on either side aisle. When it is your turn state your name and whether or not you are a senator or a substitute and the unit you represent. The rules of the Senate require that Senators or substitute senators be allowed to speak first, and then after they are done guests are welcome to speak.

The Senate is not a time for personal conversation with a speaker. Please limit yourselves to one or two questions, unless you are making a motion or an amendment to a motion before the Senate. For additional discussion you should meet with the speaker after the meeting.

The agenda today was set by the Senate Steering Committee and posted on the Web site in advance. It is now up on the screen.

The first order of business is to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2019 Senate meeting. Those minutes have been posted on the Web site. Are there any additions, changes, or corrections to the minutes? (pause) Hearing none, the minutes are approved by unanimous consent. Thank you.

I would now like to make a few remarks for the Senate.

The first remark is about the Senator Orientation that we had in September.

We had a successful “Senator Orientation Acclimatization & Review (SOAR)” session on September 4th, 2019. I would like to thank everyone who was involved in SOAR session to get feedback, respond to questions, explore senatorial roles and discover some perceived ‘best practices’ of a highly effective senator. I also encourage the new senators, who were not able to attend the session, to reach out to the Executive committee, if you have questions regarding senatorial roles. I strongly believe that the more effective senators would result in the more effective Faculty Senate.

The second remark I would like to make is about the Senate Survey.

After the success of the Senate Survey from last academic year, the Senate Executives would like to continue gathering feedback about issues and concerns relative to faculty. Therefore, we have sent out the information on the Senate survey to the Senators on September 3. I would like to remind you that the deadline for submission is September 20. I strongly encourage everyone to respond to the survey.

The third remark that I have is regarding the Auburn Research Symposium.

The 2019 Auburn Research Symposium will take place on October 3, Friday, and registration is now open. This symposium is designed to give faculty, students, and alumni a chance to learn more about the variety of research underway at Auburn University. It’s a day-long event, from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. and will take place at the AU Student Center.

Now I would like to introduce the officers of the Senate and our administrative assistant. [5:53]

Michael Baginski is the Immediate Past Chair, Don Mulvaney is the Chair-elect, Adrienne Wilson is the Secretary, and Greg Schmidt is the Secretary-elect. James Witte is our parliamentarian. Finally, our administrative assistant is Laura Kloberg.

The first item of business is some remarks from the Interim President Jay Gogue. The floor is yours. [6:25]

Dr. Jay Gogue, Interim President: Thank you. Great to be with you today. Last week as all of you know was homecoming. There were some building dedications, but there’s one I want to call your attention to because I think it’s really important. Thursday afternoon the local hospital, EAMC dedicated, had a great ground breaking, I should say for a new facility in the Research Park that will have a full-scale emergency room in it. This is really important to our community, our campus, certainly our students and folks on this campus. You will be within a couple of minutes from an emergency room service versus the drive to Opelika. To me that was an exciting ground-breaking. We had new facilities opened in business as well as in engineering.

Second thing I want to mention: I came across a memo that was probably 2 or 3 weeks old but was really impressive to me. It talked about the number of students in the Honors College. I can remember not that long ago when there were 500 or so students and the numbers that I saw were right at 2000, 1900 and something. The average high school GPA was 4.3 and as I recall the average ACT was 32, so pretty impressive numbers when you see those.

The other thing I want to mention is we had a Board of Trustees meeting on Friday and there were several items I want to report back to you on. One, the budget was approved. A lot of people have been involved with that, but it was a 1.45 billion dollar budget. My understanding is that salary letters have gone out. Is that basically true when I look out (to the senators). That occurred at the Board meeting. A second thing at the Board meeting, there were 8 items that focused on the academic agenda of the university. The academic recommendations, all 8 of those were approved by the Board.

The final thing is the search for a new President. I will relieve you, I am not involved that, so I want to make sure you know. The Protem, Wayne Smith, said that they will begin their work in the later part of the fall and into spring semester. It will be inclusive, it will be a full fledged search and screen type committee to guide their activities and that is about as much as I know about it. I’d be happy to respond to questions.

We have started, I know last time Michael had asked about visiting academic departments. We have scheduled a number of those, I don’t think they are finished scheduling, but we have started with the actual visits. I have to tell you it is extremely rewarding to spend an hour with a particular academic department.

Thank you.

Nedret Billor, Chair:

We have one action item. Adrienne Wilson, senate secretary will present the replacements for Senate Committee members that we need to vote on.

Adrienne Wilson, Secretary: Good afternoon. This is a roster of individuals who kindly volunteered to take over replacement positions on our Senate Committees. We have Daren Olsen for Faculty Research, Lorenzo Cremasschi and Libba McMillan for Graduate Council, John Beasley for Non-Tenure Track Faculty, Delaney Bullinger for Retention, and Robert Finkel and Jessica Starkey for Library.

If you take your clickers, press A for yes and B for no. A= 60, B=1. Thank you very much.

Nedret Billor, Chair:

Next, we have 3 information items. First Julie Huff, assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Communications. She will talk about dual career services guidelines.

Julie Huff, assistant Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Communications: Good afternoon. Thank you to the Senate Steering Committee for having me talk about our dual career guidelines that our office has drafted. This is something that the Provost’s Office has looked at with Kerry Ransel and myself this summer very intensely because what the development of the guidelines does is it aligns with strategies our office has undertaken in recent months to support and enhance strategies as they relate to the retention and recruitment of faculty.

What we’ve done is we know this is an area of interest and importance for our department heads and chairs at our academic leadership retreat last month. Several of the department heads and leaders mentioned that this topic comes up frequently when discussing hiring and recruiting of prospective faculty along with childcare needs. The good news is that we addressed childcare needs with the opening of the Big Blue Marble Academy this June and that we also addressed this particular issue by creating a set of guidelines for hiring units that will guide this process. We worked with the General Counsel Office this summer and Kelly Taylor to draft guidelines. These are available on the Provost’s Web site. [12:27] What they do essentially is they give us a consistent process and procedures for how to support faculty with dual career needs. The goal of the guidelines is to outline a process that supports and also gives options to units that are mutually beneficial to both the department, the unit, and the faculty member and their spouse or partner.

If it is a spouse or partner for example with faculty needs, what the guidelines do is outline criteria and a process that could result in various options if for example there is a position available and the spouse or partner meets the criteria for that and has faculty support it could result in a search waiver, it could result in potentially the spouse of partner being considered in a candidate pool of an ongoing search, it could result potentially in the creation of a bridge position for that particular individual, it could result in the spouse or partner in a non-tenure-track faculty position until a tenure-track position becomes available. It also outlines peer institutions in the area that we can work with on behalf of the potential hire to seek potential faculty hiring opportunities at those institutions.

If it’s a faculty member with a spouse or partner that has administrative or a staff employment need, the guidelines outline the procedure for how the units can work directly with HR to facilitate that.

Currently we do this. This is done by units on a case by case basis, obviously, no guarantee of employment, but they do occur. What the guidelines do essentially is they formalize the process. One thing we know and learned from talking to faculty leaders this summer is that the earlier in the process the hiring unit knows that the prospective candidate has a dual career need the better. So, what we’ve done is, Kerry Ransel has asked the college HR representatives to include the language on the screen up here in their position announcements and advertisements. We also have asked HR college liasons to give a copy of these guidelines to faculty that are final candidates and have included the language in a link to the guidelines on the newly created faculty recruitment Web site. [14:56]

Essentially that’s what the guidelines are and what they do. I’ll be happy to answer any questions.

Nedret Billor, Chair: I would like to thank everyone who made this possible. This was an important issue and I’m glad it’s been sorted out. Thank you.

The second information item will be on the information on civility and Kevin Coonrod, Auburn University Ombudsperson will present this.

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: Thank you, Nedret. Good afternoon.

I’d like to take a few minutes today and talk about civility on campus and actually the lack of civility sometimes and talk about ways that we can avoid this and how we might be able to identify it when we see it happens. I am very pleased and proud to have been your ombuds here for 6 years now and each year the number of new visitors I’ve seen has increased. It began at 183 and this year I saw 305. A new visitor only gets counted once. I may see them ten times, but just one person who brings in a set of facts becomes a new visitor and that’s how they become a statistic in the Ombuds Office. The four precepts that I work under are independence, neutrality, confidentiality, and informality. These four precepts merge together and work together well hopefully to build trust around campus. I am hoping that is why the usership has increased as much as it has.

This is a policy statement to our sexual based misconduct policy and it’s a great value statement. Basically it’s “We are an institution built upon honor, integrity, trust, and respect.” And we do our best to guarantee that we have this for all members of the university community. I can tell you that I am a repository of complaints, so, I probably will hear more about these particular type things than the regular person. About 20% of the people that come into my office are complaining about bullying in some form. That is not 20% of the people on campus that have that problem, but 20% of the people that come to see me intentionally are going through some pain; sometimes it can be some rigorous pain and very detrimental to both the individual and the organization.

A lot of different types of definitions for bullying out here, none of them are basically adopted as the one that should apply to everyone. I like this particular one because it is really simple, and it covers everything else that is in all the other policies that might be 2 or 3 paragraphs long. It is basically the acronym for the word RIP; “Bullying is abusive behavior that is Repetitive, it is Intentional, and it is Power-based.” Power can come from all sorts of different ways, from personality to conferred power. Bullying, oftentimes it is about being in control of a situation, lack of respect for the persons around you, very often it is driven by this fear of not appearing to be competent and a great desire to be competent. Sometimes people will step on others to reach that particular goal and sometimes you have people that just don’t have the skills needed to work with people in a more constructive and productive manner. Bosses in the workplace tend to be the majority of bullies because it is power-based. An interesting statistic: 72% of employers across the workplace in America deny there’s a problem or if they see that there is one they will discount it in some way, or rationalize it.

The more we know about this I think the better. It will be easier for us to confront problems as we see them. One of the problems is that we don’t understand it and when we see it we don’t know what to do about it. Hopefully I can help you with that today. There are quite a few slides, I am going to go through them quickly, but all of these are listed on the Senate Web site so you will be able to go back and see these.

Consequences to the individual can be extreme to the point of developing coronary disease from the stress that they carry around with them all day long, 24 hours a day and so forth. Gastrointestinal problems, sleep deprivation, PTSD, withdrawing from the family, withdrawing from the community at work, and then taking these things home with them. Abuse of alcohol and drugs sometimes will stem from this, domestic violence, depression, and other reasons too...we have people attempting suicide and dying by suicide; most of these are individual. But the organization has a great stake in this because if we have a healthy workplace where people don’t feel that they are being bullied, they are far more productive. Productivity goes up and the morale is good, productivity goes up when we don’t have a turnover of employees in the workplace. Our reputation can take a hit, and oftentimes we’ll have people that say “I can’t go to work today, I just can’t go in. I can’t get out of bed.” So, we have people calling in sick. I have people come to my office who say “I have run out of sick days, but I just can’t stand to go into work because I’m afraid.”

Presenteeism, when people do come to work, but they aren’t motivated and will punch in and punch out 8 hours later but perhaps got 2 hours worth of work done. The cost of grievances, litigation, not only the judgements or the checks that get written, but the administrators time that have to go in dealing with these types of things. If they are settled earlier, we don’t have to worry about incurring those costs.

Workplace Bullying Institute did a survey across America and these are the top 10 strategies for bullying that employees found were the worst ones:

- The bully will blame them for the errors, it could be a boss it could be a co-worker;
- unreasonable job demands; constant criticism of ability. That might include micromanaging. Sometimes the signal that gets sent from a micromanager is that “I don’t trust you.” Others might be, rolling of the eyes intentionally and repetitively, and the signal there is “I don’t respect you.”
- enforcing rules more favorably for some than others;
- threatening someone with a job loss, you might get your job done quickly and on time, but you may well have lost a loyal employee along the way who may be here another 10 years, but the trust will have been broken because threatening job loss goes straight to the gut.
- putting down people,
- denying their accomplishments. The value we bring is immense and the ability to acknowledge that is one of the greatest treasures we can have as employees.

- Shunning people; and
- yelling and screaming which we all associate with bullying; and then
- steeling credit from people for the good work that they do.

There are a couple of studies out that say that in academia it actually is worse than it is in a commercial workplace, because we do have tenure and we have cultures that have been growing for 200 years, 100 years, and bullying can get embedded in the culture and it is hard to root out. One of the reasons is that we have competition for lab space, we have competition for the same grant funds and we have people through tenure are now working with each other for the next 20, 30 years and if they don’t like each other things tend to escalate and it is often times easier to get out of a bad marriage than it is to get out of a bad tenure relationship.

I get asked, “Do we have an anti-bullying policy?” [23:05] And we don’t have an overarching policy at Auburn, however we have a lot of different policies that may well apply to a particular situation. Just a couple of years ago we adopted this policy against retaliation where essentially if somebody makes a good faith complaint they cannot be retaliated against for making that complaint.

Our Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy is for employees and students alike. Where we cannot harass or discriminate somebody concerning race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, covered veteran status, sexual orientation, or genetic information. The action not only has to apply to somebody in that class but it has to come from, the genesis will come from those particular types of things. The action itself is related to those classes and it’s perpetrated against somebody of that class. These are the same things that are involved with our civil rights act, and our title VII, and then we have gender harassment policies in Title IX. [24:12]

That’s actually the closest thing we have to an all-over bullying policy we have at the university and it’s very little known, but we cannot use our university IT to harass somebody with wi-fi or computers that belong to Auburn University. If you are using those to denigrate or harass them, you may find yourself in violation of that policy that does carry up to and including dismissal as far as disciplinary action goes with it.

Faculty, we can file harassment grievances against other people. We have a special one for non-tenure track clinician and research title series where they can be dismissed for lacking collegiality or behaving unprofessionally in the workplace. And teachers cannot intimidate a student. We also have the dismissal of the tenured professor for crimes of moral turpitude or violation of professional ethics or neglecting their jobs.

Then staff and A&P; we have the progressive disciplinary procedure in our employee handbook. I believe that this says that no person can intimidate or intentionally impose on the rights and privileges of any other employee. I have heard this is something we use to discipline people with, but I would argue that this applies to if there is a target they can invoke that for protection. It goes on, fighting and so forth, major misconduct.

Students: We do have our classroom behavior policies, hazing policies, and so forth and we talked about what bullying is very quickly.

What is civility? I like this one from the literature that I have read is to be collegial with each other, collaborating, being respectful, being supportive, and then abiding by the laws and policies that govern our community.

Steps we might be able to take if we are being bullied. One is to go to your supervisor. I think this is really, really important because if one of these policies doesn’t apply we also do have a supervisor that has the ability to say “This is not the way we do things at Auburn.” And if the supervisor is the bully, then we can go to that person’s supervisor. And that is how I can help you as Ombudsperson. A myth about bullying is the best way to beat a bully is to confront the bully. Remember, this is power-based and so it is not often wise to confront somebody who has more power than you, either physical or hierarchical, but I will say if you want to confront the bully, this is a time-honored conflict resolution technique; address the behavior. Say, “I get upset when somebody treats me this way.” Rather than coming straight on and say “You’re a big jerk and stop doing that.” It lands on them differently and they don’t become defensive and are less likely to want to get into a fracas with you.

Bystander intervention: Somebody intervening between saying this is not the way we do things at Auburn University.

I can help. We have confidential conversations, strategize, I can refer people to places, and I can help people. I can help people talk through things. I screen pretty diligently for mediations with somebody who is really a committed bully. That is like confronting a bully and they can manipulate the mediation process, but if it’s in the early stages and feel that both parties can be there in good faith, I might be able to facilitate a conversation between the two and they might be able to have a conversation about that.

Finally, is taking care of yourself. Like going to the doctor, the EAP that we have (employee assistance program). Then, I’ve seen this happen, it hurts me to see it but sometimes this is the only recourse people have and that is to leave the job they have, find another one somewhere in the university or somewhere else.

Strategies to promote civil behavior, I talked about the culture before. Transforming a culture through new hires as we go through job interviews. What is the character of this person? Is this somebody who is likely to treat people with respect? Take them to dinner and see how they treat the wait staff. Do they treat them as underlings or do they treat them with respect? Education of our faculty and especially supervisors is one way to do that and I am helping in that way as much as I can. I have a workshop on Bullying, Working with High Conflict People, Active Listening, and Working as Team Work within the Workplace. So, if I can help you, I would love to do that.

Finally, people ask if there’s policy. If there is a policy there has to be buy-in for it, people have to understand and agree with it. And it has to be consistently enforced. [29:07]

Then finally leadership can pay such great dividends when we are working with this, from the top all the way down. We have had the fortune since I’ve been here, of benevolent leadership, and when people see this they tend to act the same way. When we have leadership that is not so benevolent then we have people acting that way as well. Bullying begets bullying and the statistics bear out that when young people are bullied they tend to become bullies themselves and their rate of incarceration when they are adults is much higher than those that are not bullied.

By the same token respect begets respect. So, if we treat each other respectfully that will grow. And with respect trust begets trust. Trust is foundational. Everything flows from trust and when we have that we can do incredible things and we can do them proudly. So, any questions today? Yes sir? [30:09]

Peter Christopherson, senator, Pathobiology: [for some reason the microphone was not picking up well.] I may be a bit ignorant, but for supervisors a lot of this has to do with supervisors and people who are over others. Do we have 360 reviews for supervisors in place? I worked at the College of Veterinary Medicine and know they do some of this but when I brought it up on campus it was not a universal thing. Do you know if that happens?

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: [30:43] It does happen, but it is outside of the scope of what we do, but we do have 360 reviews in some particular cases, and we do have the annual reviews, of course.

Peter Christopherson, senator, Biology: But does it happen annually?

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: We have annual review for every person, performance evaluations. [30:57]

Peter Christopherson, senator, Biology: I understand, I have an annual review but it doesn’t necessarily cover supervisor duties, it covers my professor duties reviewed. Should I have the supervisor duties reviewed?

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: I think it would be helpful for everybody who was involved to sit down and talk about things. Understand what is going on and then use each other as support people to deal with issues. I can’t tell you specifically if 360 degree reviews are available in your particular context, maybe there is somebody else here who can.

Peter Christopherson, senator, Biology: Sorry, I just didn’t know if that was a universal thing and if anybody in other departments (not intelligible).

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: Okay, sometimes we do have pinpointed reviews, but not always. Any others?

Tracy Witte, senator, Psychology: I had a question about whether at some point if you’ve had let’s say 6–8 people all coming to you independently, complaining about the same person and no one wants to come forward and say anything, are your hands just kind of tied? That’s what I worry about is that there can be a bully that everyone’s afraid to do anything about it and that person just stays forever.

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: That is an extremely good question. Sometimes they are tied, sometimes they are not. When people come to me with things like this they are frightened, they are afraid of losing their jobs, they are afraid to bear repercussions at work. I can bring trend reports up to the hierarchy where I think it might be most helpful. I like to say that there is anonymity in a crowd. So the more people we have complaining about something the less likely it is for one person to be suspected as somebody who may have come and told because the boss is going to go and talk to the person about this. One of the things, and I call it being hog-tied, I do give the promise of confidentiality and if somebody swears that you cannot go and talk about this (for even one of those 8 people) I am going to respect that. Anytime I do give a trend report, I am very diligent in evaluating it and if I think I am going to hurt somebody by doing it then I am likely not going to do it.

I like to help people empower themselves to come forward and do these things themselves. There is more power, really, coming from the individual that is dealing with this than me relating some stories. I am not an advocate, I can advocate for fair process, but I can help people express themselves, strategize how to go about that and so forth. That is one of the things that weighs heavily on me, because sometimes I want to do something, but I can’t.

Tracy Witte, senator, Psychology: Are you allowed to say to someone, “you’re not the first person who has complained about this individual.” Or is (laughter) I just think that would encourage people to come forward if they knew that.

Kevin Coonrod, AU Ombudsperson: I don’t. I have ways of encouraging people, it’s really through a process of trying to empower people on their own.

Any other? Thank you very much. [34:07]

Nedret Billor, Chair: Thank you Kevin.
Our final information item is on updates for parking. Ron Burgess and Don Andrea will give us some updates.

Ron Burgess, Executive Vice President: Thank you. I want to do an editorial comment before I start my briefing.

Kevin comes to see me once a month and I can validate the fact that he is independent, he keeps it anonymous, and he gives me a 50 thousand foot view of the general trends here in doing that. So, I think it’s a resource that we ought to be taking advantage of. Sitting in this room are the leaders of the university. People know the tribe that I came from, out of the military, I have an old saying, “every time a leader walks by a mistake and doesn’t make a correction a new standard is set.” You see something you’re supposed to say something, you should do something about it or you are part of the problem.
I am off my editorial soapbox.

We are here to talk about campus parking. We have formed a committee. That’s what we do at Auburn University. We are addressing the parking problem. The Senate is represented as is every other constituency on the committee that is chaired by Bobby Woodard, our Vice President for Student Affairs.

This is a current situation of where parking is [first slide]. I don’t know if everybody is engaged in going to class or what or their focus, but actually the number of complaints are down on parking quite honestly. You can see by the slide it is partly because our inventory is up. Inventory is up, we are doing increased enforcing out there in terms of that and we try to do more education in terms of that. But there are more parking places out there.

The task force, the committee that we put together has basically been charged by me. In a perfect world we would do away with the hunting license, if we’re able to do that. Do I think that’s where we are going to get? Honestly, I don’t know, I stood if front of this group last year, talked about where we were in terms of what it is we put in the pot for parking and gave you the metrics for that from a dollar standpoint. As I stared the committee off it just so happened that week there was an article in the Tuscaloosa paper where a student was complaining about the fact that, the hunting license—can’t find a place to park, I ought to be getting something for my \$335. Well, you all are paying \$80. So, at the end of the day do I see parking prices going up as we work our way through this? Probably so, because as I gave information at a previous meeting we will see where that goes because we want to increase the numbers that are out there in terms of what we do. The parking deck across the street from the Library has solved a lot of the problems, as has been mentioned to me. As I told this group, think about it, each parking place cost me \$26,500, that’s one parking place. I’m not the math major, I think I joked with Michael the last time I was in here; how long does it take at 80 bucks a year to capitalize that? You are going to be retired and gone. So, we are looking at it ‘cause we want to get to a bottom line where we make it better. This group has been charged to make a recommendation to me in terms of where we are by the end of November the first of December because the benevolent Interim President has told me. “Burgess, if you are not announcing it and putting it out there no later than the end of January, I’m going to cut your head off.” [joke]

Michael, I didn’t say shoot me that time. He’s told me I’ve got to stop making it where there are threats out there. next slide.

One of the options: all this slide shows is that one of the options on the table is to go to a zonal parking plan. We'll see if that one bubbles out at the end and turns to where we go. That is putting the individual with a parking pass closer to where it is, be it faculty or student in proximity to their local of where they would be. But this group is charged to look at it all, not only in terms of local, what about those individuals that have to move from one zone to another, there's a lot of different things out there. Please, you have 2 members on the committee here from the Senate sitting down here, up front. Please give your input to them. We want to solicit that because we want to be inclusive and we'll see where this come out.

Questions or comments? (none) Thank you.

Nedret Billor, Chair: Thank you to all of the presenters. This will conclude our formal agenda for today
Is there any unfinished business? Hearing none,

Is there any new business? Hearing none, I now adjourn the meeting. [40:17]